

Message Text

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PAGE 01 FREETO 00603 031351Z

70

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 EB-11 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-20

DRC-01 /165 W

----- 065427

R 031330Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9405

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 0603

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MILI, SL

SUBJECT: UNREST IN ARMY

REF A) FREETOWN 582 B) STATE 65820 (NOTAL)

1. RE REF B TO BEST EMBASSY KNOWLEDGE EX-MIN FINANCE
MOHAMED FORNA HAD LEFT COUNTRY BEFORE RECENT ARMY UNREST. WHEN EMBASSY

ISSUED HIM B-1 VISA MARCH 20 HE SAID HE WAS LEAVING IN FEW DAYS FOR
UK AND US TO CONTACT COSMETIC AND PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLIERS
FOR HIS BUDDING EXPORT-IMPORT BUSINESS.

2. ACCOUNTS OF WHAT HAPPENED LAST WEEK ARE STILL
SPOTTY AND CONFUSED. ONE PLAUSIBLE STORY GOES THAT A CAPTAIN
SHEKU KANDEH AND
SEVERAL NON-COMS WENT TO BRIGADIER MOMOH TO DEMAND INCREASED PAY
AND BENEFITS TO COMPENSATE
FOR THE RISING COST OF LIVING. MOMOH DID NOT TAKE KINDLY TO THE
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PAGE 02 FREETO 00603 031351Z

DISSENSION IN THE RANKS AND HAD THE PETITIONERS PLACED

UNDER ARREST. THE ARREST ALLEDGEDLY SPARKED BARRACKS ROOM MUMBLINGS AND SEVERAL MEN HANDED IN THEIR RESIGNATIONS IN PROTEST.

3. VIRTUALLY ALL SOURCES AGREE THAT THE ARMY DISSENSION IS CENTERED AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE KORANKO TRIBE. IN THIS REGARD IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE OFFICER APPOINTED TO HEAD THE INQUIRY INTO THE INCIDENT IS BATTALION COMMANDER SHEKU TARAWALLI, THE HIGHEST RANKING KORANKO IN THE ARMY.

4. WHILE THERE APPEARS TO BE NO EVIDENCE LINKING THE ARMY UNREST WITH OPPOSITION POLITICAL ACTIVITY, MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE THE REGIME WILL INTERROGATE CLOSELY FORMER UDP LEADERS IBRAHIM AND M.O. BASH-TAQI IN AN ATTEMPT TO PIN THE TROUBLES ON THEIR INTRIGUING.
OLSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, WAGES, MUTINY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974FREETO00603
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740075-0128
From: FREETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740471/aaaacnhv.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) FREETOWN 582 B) STATE 65820 (NOTA, L)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUN 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <24 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNREST IN ARMY
TAGS: PINT, MILI, SL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005